

Transcript of 'Sustainable Transitions and Leaders'

Season 3, Episode 20, Transforming Tomorrow

[Theme music]

Paul: Hello and welcome to Transforming Tomorrow from the Pentland Centre for Sustainability in Business. I'm Paul Turner.

Jan: And I'm Professor Jan Bebbington.

We're living in a world of transitions with AI and shifting geopolitics, so how do businesses manage *their* transitions to a more sustainable future. Clue - it's all about the people.

And what can the film industry teach us about leadership and sustainability?

[Theme music]

Paul: Are you a good leader, Jan?

Jan: It's hard to know, isn't it? So maybe...

Paul: ...no, I've asked people [Jan laughs] and the responses are very much definitive one way or the other.

Jan: I think, um, leadership is a really interesting thing, 'cause it's kind of intangible, but when you encounter a good leader you know you've seen it.

So it's one of those, you know, sort of amazing sort of concepts, I suppose. Like innovation, like sustainability, like a lot of these things that we're interested in, it's both ephemeral but also concrete as well.

Paul: Have you, in, when you've become a leader in various ways, taken elements of other leaders you've had during your career and tried to build them into yourself?

And likewise, taking elements from other leaders during your career and thought, I don't want to be anything like that.

Jan: Yeah, for sure. And um, so, so you can bring in things that you have admired from other people. But also, I suppose given that leadership is often a

long term thing, so you might be leading in an academic department for 3, 4, 5, maybe even six years, it also has to be within yourself, I guess...

Paul: ...mm-hmm...

Jan: ...you have to be authentic and you, and I think driving out your worst, you know, characteristics is okay, but pretending to be somebody else doesn't seem, that seems a hard thing to do for that kind of period of time.

So I, yeah, I guess it's some mad thing in the middle, isn't it?

Paul: Yeah, well, and yet you've managed it for at least six years as leader of that Pentland Centre...

Jan: [laughing] ...yeah...

Paul: ...you know...?

Jan: ...yeah, yeah. But it goes through phases. And I also try to reflect on, you know, what, how I need to be for the next phase. Because sort of getting things started, steady state, new strategies, that's different kind of leadership tasks, I guess.

Paul: Yes. And leadership is gonna tie in with sustainability across many ways. You've got sustainability leaders, people who are taking sustainability in a certain direction, but you'll also have attitudes towards sustainability and how you envelope them within your leadership activities. There's other ways as well.

Jan: And I guess the thing that, um, I often notice with, particularly with groups is that sometimes the leader's not the boss... [laughs]

Paul: ...mm-hmm...

Jan: ...you know, so, so there's people in all sorts of places who are doing *leadership*, but who might not have the label. So I think so that makes it even more complicated! We need some help, Paul, we definitely need some help to understand how this plays together.

Paul: We need to, as, um, I've had it described, we need to manage upwards...

Jan: [laughing] ...that's a little bit...

Paul: ...that's, that's something, yeah, yes. You, you manage the people who are your leaders and get them to lead in a way that is better and get them to

do the right things. That's something I was told I needed to do a few times in my career. You need to manage upwards with the, your leaders.

But we're not managing upwards today. We've just brought in an expert who can tell us what we're doing wrong. [Jan laughs]

You in particular, you're more of a leader than me. What are you doing wrong, Jan?

Jan: You'd be surprised Paul, where you lead.

Paul: [laughs] Where I lead people follow, whether they want to or not. Yeah, that, that, actually that sounds a bit sinister. [laughs]

Jan: It does, it does. [mock evil laugh]

Paul: Yes. I'm gonna start some kind of dictatorship. I'll write that down for after episode, active actions...

Jan: ...conquer the world.

Paul: Yes, I think today we should talk to someone who is a leadership coach, who has got experience of working with leaders around the world, someone who has founded his own business, someone who is an Entrepreneur in Residence here at Lancaster University Management School, and who guides our students to become better future leaders.

Does that sound like a good idea?

Jan: Sounds much better than you and me wittering on.

Paul: Me and you wittering on is apparently why most people listen to this podcast. [Jan laughs]

But no, the, the guest will bring far more to it than we can. So let's say hello to Sanjay Rishi. Hello, Sanjay.

Sanjay: Hi, Paul. Hello, Jan.

Jan: Lovely to hear from you. Look, could you tell us a bit about yourself, your career, and how you came to be working alongside Lancaster University?

Sanjay: Yeah, well, uh, to go back a little bit into the past, uh, you know. I, I'm, I'm a bit of a nomad because, uh, my dad was in the Army and, you know, in 16 years of formal education, I studied across 14 schools and colleges, right? So,

so I think, gave me a lot of ease with cultures and moving around and adapting.

But later on in life, I realised it also came in the way of investing in authentic relationships, because one was making and leaving friends so quickly, you know. I studied biology, anthropology, drifted into an MBA, and then I think a short stint at the Film Institute in India, you know, um, uh, gave me this epiphanic realisation that cinema was such a powerful means of creating a fantastic learning experience.

So, so the first half of my career, uh, was creating learning content, or learning experiences as I would prefer to call it, through analogue video, uh, when the CD-ROMs came along, digital video, the internet, and blended learning.

Uh, and then the past about 18, 19 years, I've, uh, moved into, uh, consulting, uh, and, leadership, organisation design and change, uh, executive coaching, customised bespoke solutions.

And actually, as Paul was mentioning, I think the, uh, the birth and the idea of my own work in transitions actually came from, uh, my second master's, my MRes with, uh, Lancaster University, uh, which I graduated from in 2018.

And, my, my coach there, uh, my mentor, Juliet McDonald. she asked me, she said, so what do you wanna focus on in your thesis? And I kept dabbling with words like, transformation, change, this, that, and the other, and finally I said, transition.

And that's why the name of the firm @intersections. So at intersections you have choices, dilemmas, transitions. And since then I've been working with the Lancaster University, since 2019, Entrepreneur in Residence, uh, Teaching Fellow, career mentor. Thanks to Paul, written a couple of articles for 54 Degrees. So that's, uh, the association.

Paul: I think it's fair to say Sanjay, in the nicest possible way, you've been around a bit.

Sanjay: [laughs] Yes. Yeah, I think the, the grey also attests to that.

[Everyone laughs]

Paul: And so in, in all of that though, in all of those experiences that, you know, you've gone from cinema to leadership, transitions, all across this, your

involvement with Lancaster, how has sustainability come to fit into your work, into your thinking?

Sanjay: So I think, uh, two responses to that. I think, uh, one is that, lasting impact, I think, uh, is, is what came, uh, thanks to cinema, right? I think, uh, that, uh, that the greats made films, you know, whether it's a Kurosawa, a Satyajit Ray, [inaudible]. It's, uh, art is like it lives on, right? I mean, it's, it's the next best thing to immortality that, uh, that can happen.

So I think, uh, stories, cinema, books, I think that, that I think somewhere left a focus on impact. And, and therefore, when I started my consulting work, uh, early 2000s, an immense focus was on training and workshops and so on.

And I found that while the workshop was exciting, but the impact it left was ephemeral, right? You know, you've done the high fives and you've gone back to work, but the shift is not taking place.

Which is where I shifted to. Um, interventions and hence customised work, typically working in the field, in the trenches, so to say, rather than, uh, disassociated with the, with the workplace reality.

And I think the second part is that, in some of my work I was exposed to, you know, adventure learning, adventure trekking, leadership through, uh, through treks and, and so on and so forth. And I think the presence of nature and its erosion is an ever-present reminder wherever you go that the world around you is crumbling and, and not much is being done.

And I, uh, so lastly, I think, uh, I've had the privilege of working with organisations, uh, UNICEF, for example, Naandi Foundations, for example. Um, Naandi Waters, uh, GEDA firms, which, are working in the area of health, energy, water, dairy, and a lot of, uh, mental wellness and mental wellbeing practitioners, I think.

So I think, I mean, in looking back, it all makes sense, right? Uh, so I can give you these, uh, three threads, but, uh, I think these were intuitive, uh, directions from inside me and, and kind of came together, right? Uh, so, so it wasn't a grand plan to begin at that time.

Paul: Mm-hmm.

Jan: So in your work, particularly with um, leaders and aspiring leaders, how do they think about sustainability? What kind of attitudes have you come across from the people you work with?

Sanjay: So, the attitudes are, are varied, you know, I mean, they, they come from a spectrum. So they could be, uh, from the oblivious and the uncaring to the aware and finally, uh, that rarity who, who acts, uh, on, on things.

But interestingly as, as I thought about our conversation today, what I realised is that there is missed a whole-of-organisation approach. You could be creating products or services, for customers, and you could be focussed on those products and services being sustainable.

But is, is the leader concentrating on the process of making those products and services and the impact on, on the physical, um, surroundings where they produce these things, and most importantly, on the people who are producing these things, right?

So I think there are hits and misses there. And I detect people picking up some aspects but not having an overview of it. And, and there are reasons for it as we, as we will, uh, uncover as we, uh, as we go across.

And I think is it also reflected in their lifestyle outside work? You know, so, uh, so that's also a question, right...?

Paul: ...mm-hmm...

Sanjay: ...so, am I living this?

Paul: So what you've, we've already mentioned a couple times when you were talking earlier about your career path and how you've come to be where you are, about transitions.

So you've been looking at sustainable transitions as well. I know discussions we've had previously, privately, and with regards to other things about sustainable transitions.

What do you mean when you say sustainable transitions, from your perspective?

Sanjay: So first, what do I mean by transition, right? So just to clarify that piece, and then, uh, to talk about, uh, sustainable transitions, right?

So, so transitions, uh, what is a transition? It's a, it's a space where, uh, where one is envisaging or one actually, uh, left where one is, the present, and has only a glimpse or a sense of where one needs to reach, right?

And excitement and apprehension are both, uh, occurring rapidly, right? And, and often the skills and the insights and tools of the past, uh, may not be relevant to the future. So, so you, you need to sort of build, future skillsets on the go.

So it's a, it's a space of, uh, it's a space of churn in the head. It's a space where, uh, where one is, uh, feeling extreme dependency and, and yet one has to unlock the wisdom within oneself, right?

Uh, but if you, if you connect what is happening inside to what is happening outside, especially after COVID, right? One could be stuck navigating multiple transitions, right? Um, some by choice, uh, many often by compulsion, right?

So if you, if you look at the AI story today, which is ever present. Promise of much, which is yet, um, partly clear, much unclear. But there are also people, uh, already losing jobs, right? Uh, geopolitics, uh, conflict, uh, supply chain issues, trade, none of this, uh, is helping.

So in such a situation how do you, how do you build the physical, uh, reality of an organisation which is sustainable and can navigate through this? And how do you equip yourself and your people inside, right? The inner work. To do, I guess, uh, like a, a whitewater rafting, right? I mean, you are, you are being just, uh, thrown down the river.

So I think that to me is, is sustainable transition, right? To take the outside reality into account and the inside reality into account and, and stitch a way forward. Easier said than done, but, yeah.

Paul: So, have you noticed changes then in attitudes towards it all when it comes to sustainable transitions, Sanjay, over the past few decades? Have you seen people shifting in their attitudes and recognising what they need to do there?

Sanjay: Well, yes and no. Um, so, with the, let me share an observation and a couple of examples, right? Uh, with the benefit of hindsight, right? Uh, and, and with this frame that I'm sharing, that there has to be a holistic view of the environment, the ecosystem, uh, and a whole-of-organisation approach.

Um, let's face it, it's easier said than done. And are our decision makers aware and taking note of this as you ask? Um, so there are two questions. One is the degree of self, uh, of awareness. I think this holistic awareness is, is rarer. Um, it is getting reflected in, in the physical, uh, infrastructure, the spaces that the

people inhabit to, uh, to an extent. But is it getting reflected in the values, the policies, processes, and ways of working? Uh, that's where I was saying yes and no.

So let me give you a couple of examples. Um, I worked, uh, with a group Danone, uh, in Turkey. Uh, this, we, we concluded this work, uh, just before COVID and, uh, the CEO at that time, Emre Kaşıkçı, he and the HR head Pinar, and then subsequently their colleague inaudible, uh, they came up with this, uh, uh, construct of creating a leadership programme.

And uh, and we did a lot of back and forth, and they said, you know what? We have access to the best colleges and, you know, universities. But we want a programme which is memorable to the participants in terms of making a shift in their careers and their lives.

And there was a big struggle, uh, for me to sort of find the pivotal, uh, the keystone, if I may call it, uh, in the arch kind of a metaphor for the programme. And finally, we settled on accountability. And how did we define accountability? We started or built the base of the programme to be accountable to oneself, right?

Where are you heading in your career? Regardless of whether you stay in this organisation or you don't stay in this organisation, uh, what's your own story? And that was an immense, uh, struggle for, uh, for the participants because, because nobody had thought about it. Or if they had thought about it, they had shied away from it thinking that the organization, like a mother, will take care of it, right? Or the next organisation they join.

And the central question was that if you are not accountable for yourself, then how will you be accountable for other people who report to you, or who work with you, or for the resources and organisation entrusts to you, right?

And, and this research, uh, was drawn from mission critical teams. So when I say mission critical teams, I'm talking about disaster management. I'm talking, uh, medicine, I'm talking about, uh, the military. I'm talking about, uh, you know, uh, adventure sports or aerobatics, uh, where, where the results are zero one, right? It's not, uh, uh, a little less profit or a little bit of loss. It's, it's lives, right?

And, and I think in all, uh, mission critical teams, uh, accountability to self, uh, uh, taking responsibility for one's actions becomes paramount. So, so this programme was created around this construct, and, uh, and there was a

measurable impact, and so on and so forth. But it was very interesting to see that the ways of working started changing. So the senior management team, uh, at the beginning of the work, they said we would like our people to demonstrate dissent. And then, uh, I remember the Chief Financial Officer, she said, uh, well these people are asking a lot of uncomfortable questions, they're saying why can't I change from this function to that function? And so on, and so forth.

And they also started impacting simple things, but high value things like, why can't we have a no-meeting day in office? Uh, why can't we leave earlier on Friday to avoid traffic jams, right? So I think there are leaders, they may not be able to frame it as a sustainable transition blueprint, but they, they create, uh, this, uh, this environment through which one can do this work. So that's, that's an example.

Jan: I really like that example 'cause, um, uh, I'm mildly obsessed by accountability and accountability to oneself as the sort of, the basis of thinking about how to be in the world.

I also like the way you talked about, like, a holistic approach, but also both internally and externally, um, being aligned in around sustainability. Do you observe situations where this match between actions and attitudes is not there?

Um, and, and why do you think that's the case? So first, is there a mismatch? And then, uh, it would be interesting to hear your reflections on why you think that happens.

Sanjay: So I think, uh, the fundamental reason I can, or two reasons I can come up with and, and please, uh, please, uh, let me know if, uh, if that answers your question. One is, is the action driven by the right intent, right? So what is the intent behind the action? So are we doing something, an intervention, whether it's leadership development, organisation change, or all the nice words that we have today, are we doing it to, for example, get ourselves, listed in a, as a public company or improve our market presence before there is a merger, or to let head office know that, you know, we are spending our budgets wisely, right. Is that the intent, posturing? Or, or is the intent actually, uh, you know, genuine, authentic betterment of, of people in the surroundings? So that is one.

Uh, the, the other aspect comes from I think, uh, a larger, uh, can, of a, you know, [laughs] I don't know if you can call it a larger can of worms, [laughs] but a larger messier issue, which is, what is the, uh, how is the, uh, if you're a subset in a larger set, let's say you are a country organisation, or a state inside a country, then are you aligned with the larger ideology of the organisation?

So, so there are leaders who, who take charge, who try to do certain things, but then they run afoul of, uh the, the geography CEO. So for example, you could be a country head in Malaysia or Indonesia, but, uh, is the Asia-PAC management aligned to what you're doing? Or you could be, uh, a Latin America CEO, but is the Americas management aligned to what you're doing? Right?

So, so I think, that, uh, starts, um, creating a mismatch. Uh, so intent and also alignment with the larger ideology of, of the people who, who hold the levers.

Jan: What I'm also interested is, is hearing about what you observe with different leaders across the world and how attitudes might vary, by geography.

And I guess this has really been on, um, our mind during this podcast because in, um, North America in particular, particularly in the USA, attitudes towards sustainability in a general political sense has changed. And that seems to have some flow through to organisations and then flows through to how leaders think about sustainability.

Whereas other parts of the world, if you like, sustainability might be drawn from more deep-seated values and, and approaches to life. And it'd be just interesting to know whether or not you see some of those variations as well between different places, which might give you different hope for transitions and transformation in different places as well.

Sanjay: So it's interesting. Um, so this might appear contradictory, but it's not actually because, I intent is universal. So you can find well-intentioned people and leaders, um, anywhere. I mean, whether it's North America, Asia or Latin America, et cetera, Australia.

But I think in general, in the East, and I, when I say East, I'm talking about, you know, the Mediterranean eastwards, the emphasis on relationships and on community is, uh, is higher, right?

That's the way of life, that collectivism, uh, you know, if I may say so, uh, versus individuality, suggests, uh, I can give an example, uh, of the late, uh,

God bless him, Ratan Tata, the, uh, chairman of the, the, the late chairman of the Tata Group, uh, which is, you know, from salt to steel, they're all over the place.

Uh, years ago, there was a unrest in the eastern part of, uh, India, industrial unrest, became a political, uh, situation, and I won't go into the merits of that. But, the Tata group had to exit, uh, because of that.

And I remember as the employees moved out of the yet to be fully constructed, township, uh, Mr Ratan Tata was in the, uh, leading bus and uh, and he said that the safety of our employees is paramount, you know, to, uh, to everything else.

So, uh, so the embodiment of those values, right, in, in actions and being role modelled by a leader, uh, I think spoke volumes, right? Because that project never fully recovered, right? Uh, it was the smallest, uh, cheapest car in India, the Tata Nano, that project never recovered after that, even though they relocated.

But, uh, taking that hit, I think, is an example. Uh, however, with this interconnectedness of the world, right? Uh, if your headquarters is in, uh, Europe, or if your headquarters is in, uh, Australia, or if your headquarters is in, um, you know, uh, Turkey or, or Brazil, the values of those founders and those organisations will flow in into the subsidiaries, right?

So, so the local culture will be impacted by the, parent culture, uh, and, and that can create friction, that can create, uh, simmering resentment, uh, that can create a lot of mess.

Paul: I'm wanting to just look here, Sanjay, we talked about geographical differences, we've talked about various different attitudes, different companies, how you are shaped by what comes before.

I'm just thinking about generational differences. And we've spoken a few times on this podcast before in terms of family businesses, how transition can be an opportunity for more sustainability to be built in because the attitudes of the next generation might want to have sustainability as a more core issue.

We've also spoken about students, younger people and their attitudes, and the positivity of them, and the activity of them. But I also know from talking to you previously that the next generation see what the previous generation have had, and whether it fits with sustainability or not, they want that sometimes

they want the fast cars, they want the private jets. They want all of those kind of things which don't necessarily have sustainability written all over them at all, but they, they come to see that as what success means.

It means having those kind of assets and those, that kind of lifestyle. Do you see that a lot, or are you seeing more the attitude of people maybe thinking, yeah, that's what the last generation had, but we need to be different.

Sanjay: Yeah, I mean, that's a powerful question because, uh, it's also connected to what Jan was, uh, saying earlier about geographical differences. Where are they different and where are they not different?

So I think, as human beings, we are, our lifestyles are really what, what we decide, but we are also influenced by where we work because that's where we get, uh, influenced by, that's where we get our monies from, uh, you know, uh, the communities that we're apart of.

And how do we get a sustainable lifestyle, right? Is the way I'm paraphrasing your question. The focus is on, is that my lifestyle sustainable? Because if all the media bombardment is that success equals bigger cars, multiple houses in villas, maybe a Gulfstream G5, then how do we start making choices which are good for ourselves and for the planet?

Sanjay For example, there is a, there are articles constantly popping up on several things. So for example, um, the, the abundance with which personal home loans are available and how a lot of young people are falling into the trap of taking a lot of loans, right?

So, so that is, uh, so, so what do you do? You earn more and, uh, so what does that do to your, so if I have to keep earning more to pay off more and to have a lifestyle, which is, you know, the jet set, then what does that do to my head space, right? I, I don't think it leaves much for, uh, sustaining, uh, myself.

I think the other pressures which we are not only seeing in India, but also South Asia, Southeast Asia, is the pressures which are leading young people to damage themselves, harm themselves, uh, and where is that coming from? Because the education, especially in certain kinds of institutions, uh, or educational, the, the grades that you need, which are being driven by unstated or stated family pressures, uh, the grades that you need to get the right college, the right job, and hence the right, uh, lifestyle. The, the stress is unbearable. There are, there are young children who don't um, yeah.

And my wife and I were talking the other day that in our childhood we, we had a lot of time to run around, play, you know, go to people's houses and so on and so forth. And today children are like, uh, early morning they have a coaching for sport, full day school. From school they're heading for some other coaching in, in studies or in art or music. So where is their childhood?

Jan: Yeah.

Sanjay: And hence, what is their adulthood?

Jan: It's a whole, it's a whole different, um, time and space and um, uh, I think Sanjay and I might be the same generation and it's sort of like...

[Sanjay laughs]

Paul: ...I think you've done Sanjay a disservice.

Jan: [laughing] Ah, he's so cheeky. But yeah, just that, you know, the chance to get bored, um, is, you know, just, yeah, not there I think for lots of young people.

Paul: Yeah. It's, uh, I've got two young children at home and we do say they have a more active social life than us, in as much as that we have Guides, we have karate, we have swimming, we have football, we have occasional other things as well, like camps and school trips and music, piano lessons.

They have so much programmed in, it programmes into our lives as well, but yes, it's, they, they've got so much programmed in. It is just nice sometimes for them just to be able to do nothing, so to speak. Nothing structured. They don't have to be there at a certain time...

Jan: ...yeah, yeah...

Paul: ...to be able to do what they want.

Jan: Yeah

Paul: We're, we're coming towards the end then, Sanjay. And we have, there's so much of your life and career we haven't had, uh, chance to look at. I, I'm really fascinated about his film career...

Jan: ...yes, indeed...

Paul: ...as much as anything. Your work with UNICEF on polio in India, various other things. But let's just draw it to a conclusion by looking to the future, and

what do you think should come next when it comes to leaders thinking about sustainability and sustainable transitions?

Sanjay: So Paul, let me try and respond at, at several, uh, levels, right? Uh, let me start by saying, what can, the individual leader do, right? Uh, which is in their span of influence and control, right?

And then perhaps move to towards what management boards and society, right? People like us who are thinking about these things. And we're talking about, uh, how this influence influences the, the younger generation, right?

So I think what leaders, individual leaders, and the ones I really respect, I've seen, learned from, right? Uh, for example, Dr Chirag Shah and Dr Ganesh Puhani, Dr Rohan Halder. These are three, uh, hemato-oncology, um, practitioners, right? Uh, Dr Shah is one of my mentors.

I've seen them working closely, right? Um, hemato-oncology, by the way, is blood cancer. Um, you know, the immensity of patients, which come, to them is, is unbelievable. But what they do is they create such a space of stillness and deep listening, right? It's like in the chaos, there is nobody else around them.

And I've, and I've seen this with the other leaders that I worked with. So, so where does that listening come from? It comes from intent. So to, to me, uh, the, in the last 20 years, if I could pick one word, which impacts transitions, it is intent, right?

Because intent creates that space. And whether you are a corporate leader, you are a teacher, you are a who, whoever you are, when you are listening deeply, you, you create that safe space. You create that space for agency, autonomy, for the other person to, to feel that they're alive and they can express themselves.

And that is a big plus in them taking on accountability, which finally creates impact. So leaders who create structures, for example, meetings which are data driven, which end with decisions. Meetings which create predictability, not rambling chaos. Leaders who have deeper performance conversation, and this ties into your earlier point, Jan, about cultural differences, right?

Performance conversations where you don't, not only understand what was done well or not done well, but you understand career aspirations, family realities, uh, interests. So you are dealing with the entire person, right?

I think this is what a lot of individual leaders, uh, can do. Uh, influence policy, influence processes, influence ways of working, right? This is in their ambit, but at a larger level, boardrooms and governments, unless and until they set, monitor and adhere to targets which focus on the health of the planet and the wellbeing and joy of the people.

Unless this becomes central and not a byproduct, transitions won't be sustainable because, uh, there, there is a latest research, uh, which has come up that, the number of mental wellbeing programmes is going on, but the impact is actually regressing. So if the organisation is wired around the profit motive or around ideology or around whatever, but is not wired around the sustainability of its people, which in turn means sustainability of at least the environment around you, then we will keep having the COP conferences in 25, 26, 27, which are much ado about nothing as far as the common citizen is concerned.

Jan: Mm.

Sanjay: So that's my, my response that if we had to fight the future with structures and tools of the past, we will always be vanquished.

Paul: Sanjay, you've given us so much to think about and to discuss, so thank you so much for joining us. It's been a wonderful discussion.

Sanjay: Thank you, Jan. Thank you, Paul.

[Theme music]

Paul: Do you feel, Jan, that you've gained a good understanding from Sanjay about attitudes towards sustainability and how they're changing?

Jan: Absolutely. And um, uh, I mean, he's such an inspiring speaker. I just felt myself leaning in to listen very, very carefully and very, in a very focused way.

And I think in particular, having conversations outside of the European Anglo-American bubble is actually quite important. And his way of articulating even, it works globally, but articulating from his, his position that holistic, um, you know, internally and externally aligned intent, accountability of oneself before you even enter into that leadership piece...

Paul: ...mm-hmm...

Jan: ...more greatly. I just, I feel quite inspired and quite humble to have had that conversation.

Paul: I like Sanjay's categorisation, sort of the range of caring and attitudes towards sustainability. He went from oblivious and uncaring to aware and acting, and you've got that, that scale, one end or the other where people are treating sustainability and, as you said, not just necessarily within the organisation. You can't rely on an organisation to shape you. You have to have personal accountability and therefore have your personal shaping of attitudes towards sustainability and leadership.

Jan: Yeah. And one of the things he said that, um, we talked about wellbeing and joy. I love the word joy. We don't use it enough. I don't think any of us have enough joy in our lives, and so that also came across as something that, you know, really, yeah, I thought, yep, joy.

Paul: This is another renaming coming up. We've had one previously, and now it's gonna be the Pentland Centre for Wellbeing and Joy...

Jan: ...joy. [laughing] You could do a lot worse than that, believe you me. Um, yeah, I also liked the fact that he's, he's interested in transition because quite often we sort of go, oh, transformation. But actually transformation is, you know, a whole different thing, whereas transition and thinking about those steps and processes and the reinforcement and then the systems and the data that would have to follow, um, processes of change. So I like transition as well.

Paul: And I liked the talk about authenticity as well, and something you mentioned at the very start before we even brought Sanjay in, about being an authentic leader and Sanjay just stressed the importance of authenticity for both companies and for individual leaders within organisations.

Jan: Yeah, yeah, no, that was pretty inspiring.

Paul: And I'm disappointed that my level of success isn't such that I have a Gulfstream G5. [Jan laughs] This podcast has not gone as well as I hoped it would when we started it. Because apparently that's it, that's the measure of success. Gulfstream G5. Do you have one...?

Jan: ...aaah...

Paul: ...back garden? Near the hedgehog path that you've got?

Jan: [laughing] Um, is, is it, is it a plane?

Paul: Yes.

Jan: Okay, that's good. I clearly haven't, [laughing] because I don't even know what it is. I kind of, yeah, I know about...

Paul: ...could have told you anything. No, it's a blender...

Jan: [laughing] ...a blender.

Paul: You're not using the Gulfstream G5 your air fryer? What are you doing...?

Jan: ...no, no. I think um, I can, uh, I can see how you can be seduced by that, but it's, but I think that's really tough. If that's, if that's your point of seduction, that's a tough life that you have to lead to get to that...

Paul: ...I dunno how much use I would get out of a Gulfstream G5. Probably not as much as most people who have one. Yeah. I've, all my money would've gone on the Gulfstream G5 and I'd never be able to afford to have anyone fly me in it anywhere. That would be the problem, yes.

Jan: Yeah, I don't, I don't think. I think you and I are not on the category of people who are going to go down that route.

Paul: No. Well, where are we flying to next week?

Jan: Well, I think that, um, given that we've really looked at leadership, I think we should look at some other tough concepts. I think innovation should be next.

Paul: Innovation. No, that's what you mean. Okay, right. Let's move from leadership to innovation and we'll speak to Barbara Salopek who's an author, an academic, and an innovator, so she'll be able to tell us an awful lot about that. And that'll be a really interesting topic next week.

Jan: I look forward to it.

Paul: Until then, thank you very much for listening and it's goodbye from me, Paul Turner.

Jan: And it's goodbye from me, Jan Bebbington.

[Theme music]